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Garth Ennis Darick Robertson

The BOYS™

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FORTY

In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.

Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female are The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most lethal force on Earth- superpower. Some superheroes have to be watched. Some have to be controlled. And some of them- sometimes- need to be taken out of the picture.

That's when you call in **The Boys**.

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SUPER DUPER

THE INNOCENTS

part one

LET'S SEE!
NOT BAD, MM?
HEY, THAT'S COOL...!
I CAN'T SEE! *NNH! NNH!* I CAN'T SEE OVER, I CAN'T SEE!
AUNTIE SIS, SHOW BOBBY! SHOW BOBBY BADOING!
THERE YOU GO, BOBBY. WHAT D'YOU THINK?
OH, *BOY...!*
THESE NEW COSTUMES ARE REALLY SOMETHING!
YOURS IS AMAZING, KID CAMO...
YOURS IS EVEN BETTER, LADYFOLD!
WHEN DOES THE NEW...UM...
I FORGOT THE WORD...
LEADER? WHEN DOES THE NEW LEADER GET HERE, STOOL SHADOW?
UH...YES, THAT'S WHAT I MEAN...
I THINK...
FUCKINGCUNT!!

SORRY...!
I'M SO SORRY, I--I DIDN'T MEAN TO--
KLANKER, REALLY, YOU DON'T HAVE TO KEEP APOLOGIZING. EVERYONE KNOWS YOU CAN'T HELP IT.
YEAH, IT'S OKAY, BUDDY...
THANKS, BLACK HOLE. THANKS, EVERYONE.
HEY, DO WE KNOW WHO THE NEW LEADER IS, YET?
I STILL THINK IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN YOU, AUNTIE SIS.
OH, I DON'T WANT TO RUN THE TEAM, YOU GUYS. I'M JUST HAPPY BEING HERE, WITH THE PEOPLE I LOVE.
WE'RE SUPERHEROES, BUT WE'RE FRIENDS FIRST AND FOREMOST. AND THAT'S WHAT MAKES US--
I'M GOING FOR IT!
AW--!
OH, HE'S ALWAYS *SO* UPSET WHEN HE COMES OUT OF IT...!
LET'S DO WHAT WE CAN TO CHEER HIM UP, WE CAN ORDER BURGERS FROM THAT PLACE HE LIKES...
I'LL GET THE KRISPY KREMES...
WE CAN WATCH THE IRON GIANT ON DVD!
...THAT'S WHAT MAKES US *SUPERDUPER.*

WELL--*ACTUALLY*--
IT'S CALLED *A NEW HOPE,* BECAUSE
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHH!!!

VINNIE'S COMICS
ACTION FIGURES
140
INFINITY WARS
FUGIO
OPEN

HEY, BUTCHUH.

NNEEEEIIIIIIGGGHH...!

YA CAN GO ON DOWN, HE KNOWS YA COMIN'.

PRIVATE

FUCK YOU TOO...

HEY...!

PULL UP A STACK OF FOUR-COLOR CRAP AN' SIT YE DOWN...!

AIN'T GOT A WHOLE LOT FOR YA, THIS MONTH...SOME TALK ABOUT BRINGIN' THE WEST COAST TEAM IN TO REPLACE PAYBACK...

THAT PRICK MALCHEMICAL GOT SENT TO TAKE OVER SUPERDUPER, WHICH MAKES NO GODDAMN SENSE--UNLESS IT'S PART OF THIS DARK MAKEOVER SHIT...AN' THAT'S ALL, FUCKS.

HOW ABOUT YOU, WHAT'S NEW AT YOUR END?

I THINK HUGHIE'S WITH VOUGHT-AMERICAN.

BULLSHIT.

WHAT I KNOW?

NO.

BUT IT IS ALL THE DATA I HAVE ON THIS PARTICULAR SUBJECT. I ASSUME YOU'VE READ IT?

EVERYTHING YOU SENT OVER.

I HAVE TWO QUESTIONS. ONE IS, GIVEN WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY ABOUT HIM, WHY DON'T YOU JUST GET RID OF THE HOMELANDER?

THE OTHER IS, WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO TRUST ME SO QUICKLY?

THOSE FILES POPPED UP IN MY INBOX BARELY TWO HOURS AFTER THE PARTY YESTERDAY...

HERE'S ANOTHER FILE.

SHOULDN'T TAKE YOU LONG.

BRADLEY, J.M.

JESUS...

COULD HE...*NOT KNOW* WHO SHE *IS*?

DO ME A FUCKIN' FAVOR.

I *DUNNO.* THE KID'S *SMART,* BUT HE'S GOT ONE OF THOSE BRAINS KINDA ONLY CONCENTRATES ON ONE THING AT *ONCE*...

DID YOU *SAY ANYTHIN'* TO HIM...?

NAH. MIGHT END UP TURNIN' IT ROUND AN' USIN' HIM ON THEM.

'COURSE. AIN'T THINKIN'.

THING THAT GETS *ME* IS, HIM MAKIN' OUT WITH HER RIGHT THERE IN FRONTA THE *FLATIRON*...

FUNNY, I CAN JUST ABOUT BELIEVE HE WOULD BE THAT STUPID.

BUT WHAT MAKES MORE SENSE IS HE WAS TOLD TO BE STUPID. YOU KNOW, 'COS VOUGHT ARE STARTIN' TO FUCK US ABOUT.

THEY *ARE*...?

THAT ONE WANKER IN CHARGE O' SUPE DEVELOPMENT IS. HE'S SOME FUCKIN'... I DUNNO.

LOOKED HIM RIGHT IN THE EYE, I DID. ON OL' GODOLKIN'S LAWN.

I THINK IN HIS OWN QUIET WAY, HE MIGHT BE A BIGGER BASTARD THAN I AM.

HUH.

WELL.

HE'S GOT THE BOLLOCKS FOR THE GAME, I'LL TELL YOU THAT MUCH. HE SENT PAYBACK AFTER US AN' HE DIDN'T EVEN TRY TO KEEP HIMSELF OUT OF IT-- MADE THE DEAL WITH 'EM AT HEROGASM IN PERSON.

IT'S ALMOST LIKE HE'S DARIN' US TO HAVE A PROPER GO...

WHICH IS ***CRAZY.*** THE BOYS VERSUS THE SEVEN, IT'S A MUTUALLY ASSURED ***BUTTFUCKIN'.***

BE THE ENDA THE HOMELANDER, FOR STARTERS. I JUST DON'T SEE HOW DOIN' AWAY WITH US'D EVER BE WORTH THAT.

YOU DONE A ***LOTTA GODDAMN DAMAGE*** IN YOUR TIME, MY FRIEND. THEY'RE DOWN ***TWO OUTTA THEIR THREE TOP TEAMS*** INSIDE THE PAST SIX MONTHS.

YEAH, EXCEPT HE DONE HIS BIT TO FINISH BOTH OF 'EM. 'CASE O' THE G-MEN, HE GAVE THE FUCKIN' ORDERS.

WHAT ***IS IT*** ABOUT THAT BLOKE...?

GOIN' BACK TO THE ***KID...***

YOU FOUND ***HIM.*** SO WE'RE SAYIN' THEY GOT TO HIM ***AFTER*** HE CAME IN, AN' ALL THE ***SHIT*** HAPPENED TO HIM THEY ***SET UP*** TO MAKE HIM ***LOOK GOOD...?***

LIKE THE BLARNEY COCK.

WELL, THAT LITTLE ***CUNTWIPE*** WASN'T WORTH A ***NICKEL...***

SO HE WAS PERFECT. BRING HIM BACK FROM THE DEAD FOR A SECOND GO, YOU'RE REALLY GETTIN' VALUE FOR MONEY.

EXCEPT, BRINGIN' HIM ***BACK*** COSTS A GODDAMN ***FORTUNE.*** SO ***NOW*** YOU'RE TALKIN' ***TWICE THE NATIONAL DEBT*** AN' A NICKEL, WHICH AIN'T QUITE SUCH A ***BARGAIN...***

HUH.

PLUS, DON'T FORGET WHAT HAPPENED WITH *G-WIZ.* THEY ALMOST FUCKIN' *KILLED HIM*--HARD TO SEE VOUGHT NOT TELLIN' *GODOLKIN* HUGHIE WAS ONE OF *THEIRS*...

GODOLKIN WAS MENTAL, DON'T FORGET.

AIN'T *NO* DENYIN' IT.

GO STARK RAVIN' MESELF, THINKIN' ABOUT THIS.

...MALCHEMICAL'S RUNNIN' SUPERDUPER, THAT WHAT YOU SAID?

WHAT ABOUT IT?

MIGHT BE A WAY TO...

I DUNNO. I'LL LET YOU KNOW.

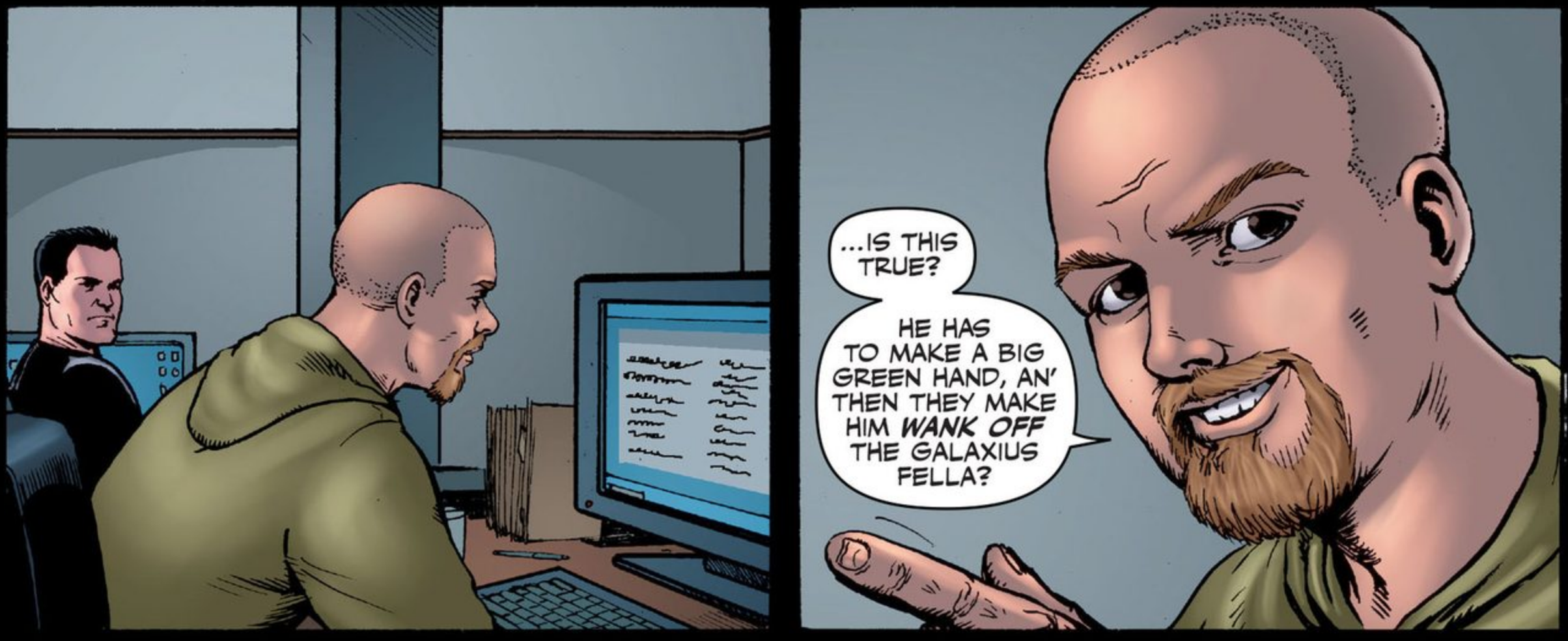
YOU GIVEN MUCH THOUGHT TO WHAT YOU'LL DO IF IT *IS TRUE?*

NO.

WHY THE *HELL NOT...?*

'COS I JUST DON'T WANT IT TO BE.

THAT'S WHY.


...IS THIS TRUE?
HE HAS TO MAKE A BIG GREEN HAND, AN' THEN THEY MAKE HIM *WANK OFF* THE GALAXIUS FELLA?

GOD, THAT'S SO HUMILIATIN'...
SO LISTEN, I THINK THAT'S ME UP TO DATE. D'YOU WANT ME TO GET BACK TO THE SEVEN TAPES, I THINK I'M UP TO ABOUT THE START OF OH-TWO...
NAH, YOU STAY AWAY FROM THEM FOR THE TIME BEIN'.

THIS IS YOUR NEW JOB HERE.
SUPER DUPER

ARE YOU SURE? 'CAUSE WE'VE HAD THE BUGS BACK IN FOR MONTHS, I'LL NEVER CATCH UP IF I DON'T START SOMETIME SOON...

M.M. AN' FRENCHIE'RE DOIN' IT. YOU TAKE SUPERDUPER.

SUPERDUPER...?

C-LIST. VOUGHT KEEP 'EM AROUND FOR THE NOSTALGIA MARKET.

SCI-FI THING WITH A SORTA PETER PAN TWIST, PERMANENT TEENAGERS FROM FIVE THOUSAND A.D. OR WHATEVER.

THING IS, THEY'VE JUST SENT ***MALCHEMICAL*** OVER TO RUN THE TEAM, WHICH IS A BIT WEIRD. 'COS THEIR IMAGE IS A HUNDRED PERCENT SWEETNESS AN' LIGHT, AN' HE'S ONE O' THE ALL-TIME WORST FUCKIN' CUNTS IN SPANDEX.

WELL-KNOWN FACT.

MALCHEMICAL

Ma

WELL, IT'S JUST THIS THING WHERE THEY'RE TRYNNA MAKE THEM ALL EDGIER, ISN'T IT?

YEAH?

SO... WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

WELL IF IT'S THAT FUCKIN' OBVIOUS, IT WON'T TAKE YOU LONG TO READ THE FILE AN' MAKE SURE, WILL IT?

UH, NO...

ON YOU GO, THEN.

ARE WE MAKING SURE WE'RE NOT OVERHEARD?

NO, IT'S JUST A NICE AFTERNOON. I GOT THE KEY FROM MAINTENANCE.

HMH.

WELL, I'VE NEVER SEEN ONE OF THESE BEFORE, BUT I'M PRETTY SURE IT DIDN'T COME FROM H.R....

IT'S AN APPROVAL FORM CIRCULATED WHEN A NEW EMPLOYEE JOINS THE COMPANY. EYES ONLY, SENIOR EXECUTIVE LEVEL.

AND THIS IS MINE, AND THAT'S YOUR SIGNATURE AT THE BOTTOM.

YOU'VE HAD YOUR EYE ON ME FOR *NINE YEARS?*

YOU WERE...WAITING FOR ME TO REACH A PARTICULAR POSITION, OR...?

ONE APPROPRIATE TO YOUR POTENTIAL. AS INDICATED BY YOUR EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND AND GENERAL APTITUDE.

BUT YOU GOT THERE SOME TIME AGO; I'VE SIMPLY BEEN WAITING FOR YOU TO APPROACH ME IN PERSON.

THAT CERTAINLY TAKES CARE OF QUESTION NUMBER TWO.

BUT I'M STILL SLIGHTLY AMAZED THAT YOU HAVEN'T HAD THE HOMELANDER LIQUIDATED.

YOU HAVE THE MEANS. AND IF THERE HAS BEEN ANOTHER EPISODE...

IF THE BUSINESS AT HEROGASM WAS DOWN TO HIM...

THAT REMAINS TO BE SEEN. CLEARLY CONFIRMATION WILL BE DIFFICULT, WITH THE AIRCRAFT AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PACIFIC, BUT I STILL BELIEVE IT'D BE A MISTAKE TO PROCEED REGARDLESS.

DON'T FORGET THAT THE ORIGINAL INCIDENT TOOK PLACE NEARLY TWENTY YEARS AGO. HE WAS STUDIED AS INTENSIVELY AS WAS THEN POSSIBLE, AND THE CONCLUSION DRAWN BY EVERY SINGLE OBSERVER WAS THAT THE INCIDENT WOULD REMAIN UNIQUE.

THIS WAS BEFORE I WAS HEADING UP SUPERHUMAN DEVELOPMENT. THE HOMELANDER I INHERITED WAS THE PERSONALITY WE KNOW TODAY.

I'VE WATCHED HIM VERY CAREFULLY. I'VE EVEN PUSHED HIM FROM TIME TO TIME.

YOU HAVE?

WHEN HE GETS ANGRY HE BREAKS THINGS. THERE'S SOME KIND OF PETTY SCHEMING GOING ON, BUT IT'S FAR FROM DIRECTIONLESS. HE HAS THE SENSE TO TRY AND COVER IT UP.

WERE IT NOT FOR THE OBVIOUS EVIDENCE OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS YOU SAW, I'D ALMOST SAY HE HAS NO PSYCHOTIC TENDENCIES AT ALL.

I WISH I SHARED YOUR CONFIDENCE.

BECAUSE THOSE PICTURES WERE...

THEY WERE SOMETHING ELSE.

I CAN ONLY IMAGINE THE LOOK ON HIS FACE WHEN HE OPENED BUTCHER'S ENVELOPE.

THE FACT IS, WE NEED THE HOMELANDER. WE NEED THE SEVEN. WITH THE LOSS OF THE OTHER TWO TEAMS, THEY'RE BY FAR OUR NUMBER ONE EARNERS.

COMMITTING PAYBACK WAS A MISCALCULATION ON MY PART. IN THE END, THEY WERE NO MORE CAPABLE THAN THE SEVEN WERE ON NINE-ELEVEN.

ALL THE POWER IN THE WORLD IS USELESS UNLESS IT'S DIRECTED BY PROPER TACTICAL THINKING: WHICH IS A LESSON WE HAVE TO ABSORB BEFORE MOVING ON TO THE NEXT STAGE.

AND UNTIL WE DO THAT, WE HAVE TO MAINTAIN THE CURRENT LEVEL OF REVENUE.

IT STILL SEEMS LIKE A HELL OF A RISK...

ONE WE SIMPLY CAN'T AVOID. UNTIL TWENTY-TEN, AT THE VERY EARLIEST.

ONCE WE HAVE AN ALTERNATIVE TO ALL THIS MULTICOLORED COSTUME NONSENSE, I'LL BE ONLY TOO HAPPY TO PULL THE PLUG. BUT FOR NOW...

AND THIS SCHEMING OF HIS YOU MENTIONED, PETTY OR OTHERWISE: WHAT HAPPENS IF SOMETHING COMES OF THAT?

WE TRY NOT TO BE THERE AT THE TIME.

SO WE'RE GAMBLING...

AS EVER.

THAT'S HOW WE DO BUSINESS.

YOU WANT ME TO *GO THERE?*

JUST FOR A FEW DAYS. HAVE A DEKKO, BUG THEIR PLACE.

DO A PROPER JOB OF IT.

BUT IT'S A WASTE O' TIME, THERE'S NOTHIN' SPECIAL ABOUT THEM! ***SUPERDUPER,*** FOR FUCK'S SAKE, THEY'RE JUST A BUNCH O' SPACE CADETS!

YEAH, BUT WITH MALCHEMICAL COMIN' IN THEY MIGHT BE TURNIN' INTO SOMETHIN' ELSE. IF THEY'RE GONNA BE SERIOUS PLAYERS, I WANNA KNOW ALL ABOUT IT.

COME ON...!

THIS LOT'RE NEVER GONNA AMOUNT TO ANYTHIN'! I MEAN DO YOU THINK ***BOBBY BADOING'S*** GONNA BE DRAFTED INTO THE SEVEN?

I DON'T WANNA GO TO THE WILDS O' FUCKIN' JERSEY JUST TO DO A SURVEILLANCE JOB ON THESE PRICKS...!

SUPER DUPER

I DON'T WANNA LIVE IN A WORLD WHERE JIMI HENDRIX CHOKES ON PUKE AN' GARTH BROOKS THRIVES. LIFE'S A FUCKER A LOTTA THE TIME.

AN' I'LL TELL YOU SOMETHIN' ELSE: I'M NO' GONNA SIT IN A VAN FOR FIVE DAYS AN' LISTEN TO THESE EEJITS BUMMIN' EACH OTHER OFF OR WHATEVER, ONLY FOR YOU LOT TO SHOW UP AT THE END AN' SLAUGHTER THEM. BEEN THERE, FUCKIN' ***DONE THAT,*** ALL RIGHT?

THE G-MEN WASN'T US, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE TALKIN' ABOUT...

G-WIZ BLOODY WAS.

TO SAVE YOUR ARSE, IF I REMEMBER RIGHTLY...

I'M NO' HAVIN' ANYTHIN' TO DO WI' KILLIN'. I'M NO' GONNA SET UP SOME SITUATION WHERE THEY'RE PROVOKED INTO HAVIN' A GO, AN' WE MURDER THE LOT O' THEM.

SUPER DUPE

NO ONE'S TALKIN' ABOUT KILLIN' ANYONE.

LOOK, IT'S A JOB AN' IT HAS TO BE DONE. I'M GIVIN' IT TO YOU.

FUCK...!

I JUST-- I DON'T SEE THE POINT, THAT'S ALL. THERE'S NOTHIN' SPECIAL ABOUT THEM, THERE'S NOT GONNA BE ANYTHIN' EXCEPT WHAT WE'VE SEEN LOADS O' TIMES BEFORE...

COME ON, THE SOONER YOU START, THE SOONER YOU'LL FINISH. YOU CAN GET THE TRAIN DOWN THERE TONIGHT.

OCH...

SHITE.

GOOD MAN.

HERE... THEY'RE NO' REALLY FROM THE FUTURE, ARE THEY?

ER... RIGHT.

I WISH I DIDN'T HAVE TO DO THIS...

SUCKS. NEW YORK HAS INSURANCE FIRES ON A DAILY BASIS, YOU SHOULD TELL YOUR BOSS TO LOOK CLOSER TO HOME.

I GUESS I'LL SEE YOU ON SUNDAY, MM?

AYE, ALL RIGHT. 'BYE, HEN.

TAKE CARE, BABE.

ANNIE?

THERE'S SOMETHIN' I WANT TO SAY TO YOU.

YEAH?

I KNOW WE'VE NO' BEEN TOGETHER THAT LONG.

AN' I KNOW IT CAN BE A TRICKY THING TO TRUST FOLK, SOMETIMES.

WE ALL GROW UP SO CYNICAL, WE ALL HAVE TO BE SO SMART AN' SO KNOWIN'. AN' LET'S FACE IT, EXPERIENCE QUITE OFTEN BEARS THAT OUT.

BUT--THAT NEED NOT TO LOOK DAFT, NOT TO BE THOUGHT OF AS NAÏVE--

IT CAN BLIND US TO WHAT'S IN FRONT OF OUR FACES.

I LOVE YOU, ANNIE.

HUGHIE...!

I'VE BEEN THINKIN' ABOUT IT A LOT. IT'S LIKE THAT THING I TOLD YOU THAT MY BOSS SAID, ABOUT TWO PEOPLE FINDIN' EACH OTHER.

WELL, WE DID.

AN' THAT'S WHAT I WANT US TO BE ALL ABOUT.

NO' ALL THE SILLY WEE FEARS.

OH, *HUGHIE--!*

I--

I THINK I'M GOING TO *CRY*...!

OCH, DON'T DO THAT, NOW.

IT'S WHAT I WANT TOO, HUGHIE. IT'S LIKE YOU TOOK THE WORDS RIGHT OUT OF MY MOUTH, IT'S EXACTLY HOW I WANT THINGS TO BE...

IT'S HOW THINGS ARE.

AN' ONCE I GET BACK FROM THIS SILLY BLOODY TRIP, WE'LL GO OUT AN' CELEBRATE, RIGHT?

FUCKINGCUNT!!

...SORRY...

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, KLANKER.

SOOOOPERMAANNN...!

OH, DON'T. THAT PART ALWAYS GETS ME.

DOES ANYONE WANT ANYTHING FROM THE...

THE...

KITCHEN? NO, I THINK WE'RE GOOD.

OKAY...

UNNHH--

OH DEAR! OH DEAR!

OW...

STOOL SHADOW, YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T TRY PHASING THROUGH THINGS UNLESS YOU'RE CERTAIN YOUR POWERS ARE WORKING...!

COME ON, SWEETIE, LET'S PUT SOME ICE ON THAT.

THE POOR THING...

I HOPE SHE'LL BE ALL RIGHT FOR WHEN THE NEW LEADER ARRIVES TOMORROW.

I'M SURE SHE WILL BE.

YOU KNOW, AUNTIE SIS...

WE MIGHT NOT BE THE GREATEST SUPERHEROES IN THE WORLD...WE LOOK A LITTLE OLD-FASHIONED, MAYBE, AND SOME OF OUR POWERS AREN'T ALL THAT COOL...AND I KNOW WE DON'T GET INVITED TO SOME OF THE THINGS THE OTHER TEAMS DO.

BUT I STILL WOULDN'T WANT TO BE IN ANY OTHER GROUP THAN ***SUPERDUPER.***

WE'RE OKAY, AREN'T WE?

HMH.

YES, KLANKER.

YES, WE'RE OKAY.

next: THE SCOTSMAN COMETH